

Appl. No. 10/611,612
Atty. Docket No. 7005D
Amdt. dated February 28, 2005
Reply to Office Action of August 31, 2004
Customer No. 27752

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the present application.

Claim 14 has been amended based on the disclosure at, *inter alia*, page 10, lines 6-7.

Obviousness-Type Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 1-13 have been rejected under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claims 1-13 of U.S. Patent No. 6,623,834. Applicants are submitting herewith a Terminal Disclaimer to obviate this rejection. An Associate Power of Attorney is also being submitted herewith to facilitate submission of the Terminal Disclaimer. Applicants thus submit that Claims 1-13 are now allowable.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Thomas

Claims 14-16 and 18-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Thomas, U.S. Patent No. 3,546,056. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. The Office Action asserts that

Thomas discloses a method of making a wipe product comprising the steps of providing a first cellulosic layer, provided [sic] a continuous thermoplastic adhesive in the form of an adhesive coated scrim, providing a second cellulosic material, combining the layers and the [sic] applying heat to the laminate in order to shrink the adhesive coated scrim.

See Office Action at page 3. In the method disclosed by Thomas, a scrim material made of continuous nylon filaments is provided that is coated with an adhesive composition, such as a conventional plastisol. The scrim is then combined with creped tissue webs on each side of the scrim to form a composite material, while the scrim material is tensioned. The composite material is then heated by passing it over pre-heated rolls, which causes the nylon of the scrim material to shrink. After the tension is removed from the scrim material, its shrinkage causes the composite material to pucker or bulk considerably.

In contrast to the method disclosed by Thomas, the method for making a wiping article as presently claimed comprises providing a first web layer comprising cellulosic fibers, applying a thermoplastic adhesive in a continuous network directly to the web comprising cellulosic fibers, curing the thermoplastic adhesive, and then heating the thermoplastic adhesive to effect contraction of the adhesive. The resulting wiping article

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thereby has a surface topography exhibiting regions of minimum and maximum calipers, due to contraction of the continuous network of thermoplastic adhesive as directly applied to the web comprising cellulosic fibers. As opposed to the method of Thomas – which requires applying adhesive to a scrim material, combining the tensioned scrim material with creped tissue webs, heating, and then releasing the tension on the scrim material to provide puckering of the product – the present method does not require a tensioned scrim material due to the steps of applying a thermoplastic adhesive directly to a web comprising cellulosic fibers in a continuous network, allowing the thermoplastic adhesive to cure, and then heating the web with the adhesive to obtain a surface topography exhibiting minimum and maximum calipers.

Since Thomas does not teach each and every element of the presently claimed invention, Applicants submit that Claims 14-16 and 18-20 are novel and patentable over Thomas under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Manning et al.

Claims 14-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Manning et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,731,276. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. The Office Action asserts that

Manning discloses a method of making a wiping sheet comprising the steps of providing first and second cellulosic layer, providing a scrim which is continuously coated with a plastisol such as ethylene vinyl acetate, bonding the three layers, heat treating the layers and then releasing the layers from tension which was applied during heating in order to form a puckered or quilted product.

See Office Action at page 3. As with the method of Thomas, the method disclosed by Manning et al. requires that a thermoplastic binder is applied to a scrim material made of continuous polymeric filaments. The scrim is then combined between two nonwoven layers of cellulosic fibers with unequal tension applied to the scrim and the nonwoven layers which causes the nonwoven layers to become quilted to the scrim upon heating.

In contrast to the method disclosed by Manning et al., the method for making a wiping article as presently claimed comprises providing a first web layer comprising cellulosic fibers, applying a thermoplastic adhesive in a continuous network directly to the web comprising cellulosic fibers, curing the thermoplastic adhesive, and then heating the thermoplastic adhesive to effect contraction of the adhesive. The resulting wiping

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article thereby has a surface topography exhibiting regions of minimum and maximum calipers, due to contraction of the continuous network of thermoplastic adhesive as directly applied to the web comprising cellulosic fibers. As opposed to the method of Manning et al. – which requires applying adhesive to a scrim material, combining the tensioned scrim material between two nonwoven layers of cellulosic fibers, heating, and then releasing the tension on the scrim material to provide puckering of the product – the present method does not require a tensioned scrim material due to the steps of applying a thermoplastic adhesive directly to a web comprising cellulosic fibers in a continuous network, allowing the thermoplastic adhesive to cure, and then heating the web with the adhesive to obtain a surface topography exhibiting minimum and maximum calipers.

Since Manning et al. do not teach each and every element of the presently claimed invention, Applicants submit that Claims 14-20 are novel and patentable over Manning et al. under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Thomas in view of Manning et al.

Claim 17 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomas in view of Manning et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. As discussed above, neither Thomas nor Manning et al. disclose or suggest a method in which a thermoplastic adhesive is applied directly to a web comprising cellulosic fibers in a continuous network. Rather, both Thomas and Manning et al. require applying an adhesive material to a scrim material, then combining the tensioned scrim material with a cellulosic material to form a composite, heating the composite, then releasing the tension on the scrim to provide a puckered or quilted product. The presently claimed method does not require applying a thermoplastic adhesive to a scrim material, but rather directly to a web comprising cellulosic fibers, then curing the adhesive, and then heating the adhesive, which provides a wiping article having a surface topography exhibiting regions of maximum and minimum caliper due to contraction of the thermoplastic adhesive. Neither Thoams nor Manning et al. teach or suggest such a method. Applicants therefore submit that Claim 17 is patentable over Thomas in view of Manning et al. under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and accompanying remarks, reconsideration of the application and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY

By



Jason J. Camp
Registration No. 44,582
(513) 626-3841

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